



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

APR 18 2008

OFFICE OF  
ENFORCEMENT AND  
COMPLIANCE ASSURANCE

Ms. Lisa Padgett, (Code N733A)  
Homebasing/Homeporting NEPA Program Manager  
Department of the Navy  
US Fleet Forces Command  
1562 Mitscher Avenue, Suite 250  
Norfolk, VA 23551-2487

Dear Ms. Padgett:

In accordance with our responsibilities under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the Department of the Navy's (Navy) draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Introduction of the P-8A Multi-Mission Maritime Aircraft (MMA) into the U.S. Navy Fleet (CEQ# 20080079).

The Navy is proposing to provide facilities and functions to support 12 P-8A MMA fleet squadrons (72 aircraft) and one fleet replacement squadron (FRS) (12 aircraft) at established maritime patrol homebases. Six action alternatives and no action were considered, which included the following installations: Naval Air Station (NAS) Jacksonville, Florida; Naval Air Station (NAS) Whidbey Island, Washington; Naval Air Station (NAS) North Island, California; and Marine Corps Base Hawaii (MCBH), Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii. The Navy's Preferred Alternative would homebase five fleet squadrons with an FRS at NAS Jacksonville, four fleet squadrons at NAS Whidbey Island with periodic squadron detachment operations from NAS North Island, and three fleet squadrons at MCBH Kaneohe Bay.

The draft EIS evaluated the environmental impacts associated with new aircraft, personnel transition, and new construction or renovation of structures to accommodate the basing of the P-8A MMA. Specifically, it analyzed potential impacts on air operations; noise; air quality; land use and coastal zone management; socioeconomics; transportation; infrastructure; topography, geology and soils; water resources and wetlands; biological resources; cultural resources; and environmental contamination. The document presented an adequate analysis of project-related environmental impacts. Additionally, it identified areas that would require additional analysis, consultation or permitting actions required to avoid, minimize, or reduce impacts. EPA supports the Navy's evaluation of these areas.

Based on our review of the draft EIS, EPA has no environmental concerns about the proposed action, and has rated the proposed action as LO – “Lack of Objections”.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this draft EIS, and look forward to reviewing the final EIS related to this project. The staff contact for the review is Candi Schaedle and she can be reached at (202) 564-6121.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan E. Bromm". The signature is written in dark ink and includes a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Susan E. Bromm  
Acting Director  
Office of Federal Activities